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Psychological Preemployment Screening for Police Candidates: Seeking Consistency if Not Standardization

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The psychological screening of police candidates is a hotly debated topic. The type of measures used lacks consistency and standardization. This often can lead to a candidate “shopping” for a psychologist who will eventually agree to his or her mental fitness for policing. More recently, the field of police psychology has received attention as a viable field of psychology, part of which involves the assessing of candidates for police employment. A possible hypothesis is that there would be consistency among police psychologists, who would differ from clinical psychologists, as to what measures should be used and why for assessing such candidates. Recent research suggests there is no consistency or differences.

Keywords: preemployment, screening, assessments, police psychologists

The psychological evaluation of police officer candidates is just one area of practice for psychologists. Whether this should be an area of specialization continues to receive attention in the field. Of greater interest is what should be used to conduct such evaluations. This article explores the establishment and growth of police psychology and the psychological assessment of candidates with the primary focus on the lack of consistency or standardization of such evaluations. The main goal is the setting of the groundwork for a commonly accepted set of protocols for conducting such evaluations.

Being a police officer is a difficult career (Orrick, 2008). Police officers frequently deal with the more negative aspects of human nature and often must do so with a nonemotional or objective approach, while deeply constrained by law and policy (Dantzker, 2005). It has been noted that:

1. The unique nature of policing demands a selection process to find the individuals who are capable of coping with the demands of police work in a satisfactory manner (Beutler, Nussbaum, & Meredith, 1988);

2. Police officers have constant contact with people and are often in volatile situations; thus, the assessment of an applicant's interpersonal skills is important in the screening process (Hargrave & Hiatt, 1989);

3. Issues of police use of force, corruption, and suicide raise questions about the psychological well-being of those who become police officers (Cochrane, Tett, & Vandecreek, 2003); and

4. Law enforcement is one of the most dangerous, stressful, and health-threatening occupations in existence (Tanigoshi, Kontos, & Remley, 2008).

It is evident that those selected to become police officers should be thoroughly screened through preemployment evaluations prior to being hired as police officers or police officer trainees (Corey & Honig, 2008). However, while psychological testing in screening potential police recruits was first recommended and used on a very limited basis as early as the 1930s, remains popular today (Aumiller, Corey, Allen, et al., 2007; Corey & Honig, 2008).

The use of psychologists for preemployment police screening first gained the most attention when it was recommended by the National Advisory Commission on Criminal Justice Standards and Goals (1973). Since then, it appears the number of police agencies requiring psychological preemployment evaluations increased for many years. According to the most recently available data, almost all police agencies serving populations of 25,000 and greater use some form of psychological evaluation with interviews the most common, followed by aptitude and personality inventories (Reaves, 2010).

According to available sources by 2010, just over half (26) of all states required statewide preemployment testing of police recruit candidates. Thus, it appears that a substantial number of law enforcement agencies are using preemployment screening in officer hiring processes. Consequently, the hiring of the most qualified applicants would rely, in part, on systematic and appropriate use of the best practices in psychological practice in the law enforcement environment (Decker, 2006; Rostow & Davis, 2004). It would also suggest that individuals whose main focus are these types of evaluations would agree on what is the best means for such an assessment. Unfortunately, there is no nationally recognized and generally followed set of recommendations as to what questionnaire(s) or evaluative protocols should be used in doing preemployment screening of law enforcement officers (Dantzker & McCoy, 2006; Dempsey & Forst, 2007; Peak, 2008).

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Psychological Testing for Employment in Police Work

Police agencies have spent years attempting to improve their system of police officer selection, especially with respect to psychological testing protocols (Claussen-Rogers & Arrigo, 2005; Dantzker, 2005, 2007; Dantzker & Freeburg, 2003; Dantzker & McCoy, 2006). One consistent issue has been a lack of recognition as to which psychological protocols are the most appropriate. One result of this lack appears to be usage of different protocols with no consensus as to what should be used or why (Dantzker, 2007; Dantzker & McCoy, 2006).

Use of any type of psychological testing for police recruits was first suggested in 1931 by the Wickersham Commission with the focus on intelligence testing (Wickersham Commission Reports, 1931). It was not until The President's Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration of Justice (1967) that psychological personality testing was recommended. According to Lefkowitz (1977), this recommendation came about because the Commission thought police agencies should utilize employment testing currently associated with modern management practices described by industrial—organizational psychology.

Recognizing that policing can be highly stressful and encompasses relatively unique activities, The President's Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration of Justice (1967) strongly emphasized and encouraged the selection of police officer candidates who were well adjusted, had good coping skills, the ability to adapt to unique activities and unusual demands, the ability to accept supervision, a willingness to be exposed to danger, and ability to accept contradictory roles (Beutler et al., 1988; Craig, 2005). Therefore The President's Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration of Justice (1967) recommended "Psychological tests, such as the MMPI, and interviews to determine emotional stability should be conducted by all departments" (p. 129). Additional support for psychological screening came from the 1968 National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders which recommended the use of psychologists or psychiatrists to examine police officer applicants, including psychological tests to assist in determining job fitness (Rostow & Davis, 2004).

These two commissions' recommendations were later supported and expanded by the 1973 National Advisory Committee on Criminal Justice Standards. This commission established in their standards, 13.5 The Selection Process, which recommended the by 1975 all police agencies should be using a qualified psychiatrist or psychologist to "conduct psychological testing of police applicants in order to screen out those who have mental disorders or are emotionally unfit for police work" (p. 337). In addition, a key aspect of the recommendations was that the results of such testing be used as a predictor of performance but only when the validity and reliability of the predictor has been established by the research. This last item remains unfulfilled by the research.

The psychological screening of police officer candidates remains a viable concern. Craig (2005) concluded that screening of police officers and other law enforcement personnel has become recognized and desirable by police agencies especially with respect to assessing emotional stability and to assist in the prediction, control, and prevention of police corruption and abuse. He supported the screening endorsed by The President's Commission on Law and the Administration of Justice (1967), 1968 National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorder, and the courts. Lee

(2006) confirmed that the Courts have forced police departments to become more aware of psychological issues by holding that an agency can be held liable for failing to assess the psychological fitness of a police officer candidate.

In an attempt to bring continuity to the police screening arena, the Police Psychological Services Section of the International Association of Chiefs of Police established its first set of guidelines in 1986 (Curran, 1998). The latest revision was approved in 2004. While no one test was endorsed, the recommendation suggested that, "the screening should be focused on an individual candidate's ability to perform the essential functions of the position under consideration" (Curran & Saxe-Clifford, 2004, p. 2). The closest the Committee came to an endorsement was Guideline #8, which stated: "A test battery including objective, job related, validated psychological protocols should be administered to the applicant. It is preferable that test results be available to the evaluator before screening interviews are conducted" (Curran & Saxe-Clifford, 2004, p. 2).

Another organization with broad guidelines endorsing psychological screening is the International Association of Directors of Law Enforcement Standards and Training (IADLEST) whose model of minimum standards for psychological screening suggests,

State law or commission regulation should require hiring authorities to administer a psychological screening to all applicants for sworn police or corrections officer positions, and not to hire applicants who suffer from a current mental illness that would affect their ability to function safely and effectively in the job, or display characteristics such as a tendency to unnecessary violence or poor impulse control (www.iadlest.org/modelmin).

According to the 2005 IADLEST Sourcebook, 26 states mandated psychological testing of police recruit candidates. However, data from Alaska, Georgia, Hawaii, Louisiana, New Jersey, New York, and Texas had not been included. Review of websites for these states found five of the seven required psychological testing, bringing the total of states mandating psychological screening of police candidates to 31 by 2009. The protocols these states tended to use were the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory-2 (MMPI-2), Clinical Analysis Questionnaire (CAQ), California Personality Inventory (CPI), Sixteen Personality Factor Questionnaire (16PF), Cultural Fair Test of Intelligence, Inwald Personality Inventory (IPI), and Reid Report. The most popular protocol was the MMPI-2, mandated by 15 of the states (IADLEST, 2005).

An interesting side note to the issue of testing was found in Ainsworth (2002) who agreed that "In order for any law enforcement organization to function efficiently and effectively it is essential that it employs those individuals who are best suited to the complex task of policing" (p. 34). However, he also raised the question of whether psychological testing was even necessary. His response was a resounding yes because it can assist in recruiting the right sort of person, limits bias in selection, saves costs in training, increases indemnity for police chief and agency, represents an attempt to bring more objectivity into the decision making process, and screens out those considered unsuitable. He, too, suggested that the preemployment screening criteria, currently in use, remain problematic.

Regardless of which protocols are used, one would think there would be consistency among those psychologists whose main

practice is in the field of policing or what has become known as police psychology. However, this field, although in existence for many years, has only in recent years received any attention as an independent area of psychology.

Police Psychology

While the concept of police psychology is a relatively recent creation (Bartol, 1996), psychology's relationship to policing extends back to the early 1900s (Aumiller et al., 2007; Corey & Honig, 2008; Zakhary, 2007). The Wickersham Commission Report (1931) suggested that it was essential for police agencies to screen potential police candidates through the use of intelligence tests to determine whether the applicant had the intellect level to perform the duties of a police officer. Because these types of tests were the bailiwick of psychology, this appears to be the first foray into policing for psychology. Reiser (1973, 1982) indicated this type of testing was initially completed by a consulting psychiatrist but that many agencies followed the lead of the Los Angeles Police Department and eventually started using a psychologist.

The use of a competent psychologist was endorsed by the National Advisory Commission on Criminal Justice Standards and Goals (1973) which stated that "Psychological evaluation of police applicants is considered an essential part of the overall selection process" (p. 276) and eventually recommended that the evaluation be conducted "under the supervision of a licensed, competent psychologist or psychiatrist" (p. 498). Despite recommendations and support from national commissions, the development of the role of the police psychologist has slowly moved forward although not without its challenges. For example, Parisher, Rios, and Reilly (1979) in their examination of the role of the police psychologist found that psychologists were primarily used more as consultants than as employees, with applicant screening as the most frequently mentioned service. Furthermore, it appears that not all police agencies tended to accept psychologists' recommendations. Lester, Babcock, Cassisi, and Brunetta (1980) studied one police department's decision to hire an applicant for the position of police officer despite contrary recommendations by the psychologist. Of particular interest is that they noted there was a difference in what the psychologist used to screen the applicants versus that of the police department suggesting that perhaps the use of differing protocols may offer inconsistent findings.

Despite the findings of Lester et al. (1980) using psychologists in policing appeared to continue growing. Ostrov (1986) discussed the involvement of psychology in law enforcement, noting how the psychological evaluation of police recruits was becoming increasingly sophisticated and was being applied to both prescreening and fitness-for-duty decisions. He suggested that the involvement and role of the psychologist in law enforcement had intensified and was going to continue to expand. More recently, Zakhary (2007) described how the International Association of Chiefs of Police created a special section, the Police Psychological Services Section, in 1984. This section was initially composed of a small number of licensed psychologists whose main role was providing psychological services to law enforcement. Over time it has managed to establish guidelines for psychologists who may be interested in consulting with police agencies. Curran (1998) noted that the International Association of Chiefs of Police's Police Psychological Service Section adopted guidelines in 1986 for evaluating

police applicants. This included the recommendation that only licensed or certified psychologists, trained and experienced in psychological testing, and familiar with law enforcement assessment techniques, should conduct psychological preemployment screening.

As a result of the above guidelines, police chiefs were encouraged to hire psychologists who were primarily police-oriented. DeVasto (1990) explained there were few psychologists trained as police psychologists. He supported the need for credentials suitable for the duties of the police psychologist which included conducting preemployment psychological testing. Janik (1994) concurred that specific qualifications should be sought in the police psychologist hired by a police administrator whether as an in-house psychologist or as an outside consultant. He suggested the psychologist meet the minimum qualifications in accordance with the American Psychological Association's General Guidelines for Providing Psychological (Services Board of Professional Affairs, 1987). However, not everyone agreed as to which psychologist best fit for policing. Aamodt (2000) suggested that the psychologist best fitted for the role of assisting law enforcement is the Industrial/Organizational (I/O) psychologist. He supported this stance by describing how the I/O psychologist seeks to select the best personnel by starting with conducting a job analysis which attempts to identify job tasks. Upon identifying the tasks the I/O psychologist will then identify skills and abilities the candidate will need to perform identified tasks. To determine whether the candidate meets the criteria identified, the I/O psychologist may use such methods as behavioral interviews, cognitive ability tests, and personality tests.

Regardless of the differing of opinions as to what makes the best psychologist, those who identify themselves as police psychologists should be the best qualified simply because there are multiple services that may be offered by a police psychologist (Dietz & Reese, 1986; Zelig, 1987). For example, Bergen, Aceto, and Chadziewicz (1992) found that police psychologists spent much of their professional time doing counseling, screening, and selection. Scrivner and Kurke (1995) discussed how, since the 1970s, police psychology has been engaged in development of selection testing and assessment, as well as other activities. They indicated that psychologists servicing police agencies as consultants were used for screening and assessment. Davis (1995) agreed that the integral role of police psychologists was police officer selection whether they worked in-house or as an outside consultant. Bartol (1996) in a survey of 152 psychologists regarding their function in law enforcement found that over one-third of their time was on pre-employment screening.

Whatever services are provided, psychologists who provide services to police agencies should meet particular criteria. This criteria might have been best enunciated by Padgett (2007) who outlined the following as necessary of the psychologist who performs the police candidate screening: is licensed as per the American Psychological Association (APA) and individual state's standards, is well trained in assessment procedures, has been well immersed in the psychological screening for police literature, has awareness and knowledge of all federal employment laws and guidelines, possesses clear and accurate knowledge of APA Guidelines covering psychological testing, and understands what it means to be a law enforcement officer. Furthermore, the Police Section of the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP)

produced a document (Pre-employment psychological evaluation services guidelines, 2004) that may best describe the police psychologist which can be retrieved at IACP Web site. Therefore, for the purpose of this discussion, a psychologist who provides services to police agencies, especially assistance with selection and screening of potential employees, fits into the mold recognized as the police psychologist. However, this individual may just be a psychologist who consults with police agencies.

Regardless of the individual's label as psychologist, conducting police psychological preemployment screening is important and should be consistent (Davis & Rostow, 2008). It is important to identify what protocols are used in this process (Dantzker & McCoy, 2006). Police psychologists regardless of affiliation with the agency, should be similar in what they identify as appropriate screening tools.

What Protocol To Use?

Selecting the best candidates for a job is very important to policing. Selection systems have varied and have often been a collection of tools. Bartram (2004) noted the historical tendency had been to use psychological assessments designed to identify or determine a particular psychological area such as personality, rather than something designed for specific police employment-related criteria. Despite the number of states requiring psychological screening for police candidates, as previously noted, there are several different personality protocols used by police agencies.

According to the literature, six of the personality protocols most frequently cited as being used for preemployment screening are the MMPI-II, IPI, CPI, Personality Assessment Inventory (PAI); NEO Personality Inventory (Revised) (NEO PI-R); and the Sixteen Personality Factor (5th ed.; 16-PF; Craig, 2005; Dantzker & Freeberg, 2003; Jacobs, Cushenberry, & Grabarek, 2011; Kitaeff, 2010; Lee, 2006; Personnel Selection, 2005; Sanders, 2003; Weiss, Rostow, Davis, & DeCoster-Martin, 2004). It appears the most often cited protocols being used are the MMPI-II, CPI, and the IPI with the MMPI being identified as the most common choice (Dantzker, 2007, 2010; Kitaeff, 2010; Dantzker & McCoy, 2006).

Since its development, the MMPI appears to have been a popular psychological test. Tydlaska and Mengel (1953) noted it as being among the best personality tests available at that time. Yet, as they reported, despite its utility in hospital and clinics, it had not yet been used much for preemployment screening. However, based on current literature, this appears to have changed considerably with it becoming one of the most popular tools in employment screening among police agencies (Dantzker & McCoy, 2006). Therefore, it is not surprising the MMPI has had its fair share of scrutiny.

In 1965, Congress took a closer look at the MMPI when it held hearings concerning testing employees hired for government positions (Highhouse, 2002). Of particular concern was whether a test such as the MMPI invaded an individual's privacy during employee screening. However, Congress did not find any reason to outlaw the use of the MMPI. Although Congress didn't find any reason to outlaw its use, its suitability for assessing police officer candidates continues to receive scrutiny (Claussen-Rogers & Arrigo, 2005; Kornfield, 1995; Siegler et al., 1990). Several reasons for the continued scrutiny appear to include whether it is designed to evaluate job performance, its normative data for police officers

underrepresents women and minorities, it elicits responses related to sexual orientation and religious attitudes; and it fails to measure the construct of conscientiousness (identified as one of the best predictors of job performance and work behavior; Claussen-Rogers & Arrigo, 2005; Kornfield, 1995; Siegler et al., 1990).

Despite the popularity of particular tools, a consensus as to which is best for police screening does not appear close. Johnson (1983) found the most frequently used protocols for employment screening were the sentence completion test and the MMPI. He compared this to what was used to screen firefighter applicants finding the sentence completion, MMPI, and the Bender-Gestalt were most often used. Hargrave and Hiatt (1989) identified the CPI as an objective psychological protocol with promise in the area of policing screening. Their research explored the relationship between the CPI and its suitability for police work, in training and on the job. To accomplish their goal they conducted two studies, the first of which found that police graduates who had been rated as psychologically unsuited by their training instructors had significantly lower CPI profiles than those rated as psychologically suited.

In their second study, looking at problem versus nonproblem officers, Hargrave and Hiatt found the nonproblem officers to be more comfortable with their selves and their current life situations, had a higher morale, and were more tolerant, trusting, and diplomatic. Conversely, problem officers were less dependable, less willing to observe social norms and customs, were less disciplined, less stable, and less likely to plan ahead regarding what actions they might take in a given situation. They concluded their research supported using the CPI for screening police candidates.

Costa and McCrae (1992) noted that the IPI was first developed with the intent of measuring personality characteristics relevant to psychological fit in policing. Its development was "predicated on the notion that items written as relevant to police occupations and personnel would be better predictors of LE [Law enforcement, added by author] job performance than items from more general inventories such as the MMPI" (p. 42). They claimed the IPI was a more powerful assessment than the MMPI for job performance predictability. However, the main concern they had with the IPI was their belief it does not measure conscientiousness. Therefore, they suggested an agency utilize the IPI to measure antisocial behavioral characteristics and the NEO-PI-R to measure personality trait of conscientiousness in screening police candidates.

Scogin, Schumacher, Gardner, and Chaplin (1995) noted, despite the growing use of psychological testing in police screening, there had been little done to date as to predictive validity. Their study involved the review of multiple studies comparing the predictive value of the MMPI versus the IPI. Their results suggested both tests' results have a significant predictability of behavior for police work but that the IPI was a better predictor than the MMPI. Furthermore, they found using both for predictability was no better than using the IPI by itself.

Sarchione, Cuttler, Muchinsky, and Nelson-Gray (1998) took a page from personality theory, using the Big Five, or five-factor model of personality, to address police testing. They argued these factors tend to be well represented in policing. As such their stance was the CPI had been demonstrated to have the ability to predict behavior. Citing a variety of research previously conducted using the CPI they argued that the CPI should be used to evaluate police candidates.

Mufson and Mufson (1998) reviewing the research available at the time suggested the two more popular prescreening protocols used with police candidates in urban areas was the MMPI and the IPI. They found, however, the research did not indicate what prescreening protocols, if any, were being used for screening police candidates for rural area police agencies. Therefore, their study sought to determine the prescreening ability of the two popular protocols for officers being employed by rural police agencies. They found, comparing evaluation from supervisors, the IPI appeared to be the better protocol for identifying individuals who were better at being police officers in rural areas than the MMPI.

Varela, Scogin, and Vipperman (1999) recognized the existence of the various protocols used for prescreening and their utility but also placed emphasis on the need for an in-depth interview. Their study looked to add to the literature by supporting a semistructured interview tool recognized as the Law Enforcement Clinical Interview (LECI). Their findings did not support an immediate use of the LECI, but did justify continued research to establish reliability and validity.

Detrick and Chibnall (2002, 2006, 2007) discussed how the MMPI-II and IPI have been the most commonly used tests in the screening of police candidates. They did note the MMPI, although not originally created for the purpose of screening police candidates, was the most commonly used until the IPI and other protocols were developed. Furthermore, they reported the MMPI had some success in predicting performance but argued there was a need for a greater database prior to making any final declarations about the use of the MMPI.

DeFilippis (2003), using the MMPI-II and the IPI to screen deputies, investigated the relationship between performance and psychological evaluations designed to predict officer behavior. Using the results from these two tests which had been administered during the preemployment screening, he examined the hired deputies' performances over a period of one to seven years. Information collected included disciplinary actions, absences, commendations, promotions, letters from citizens, terminations defining poor duty performance, and a subjective supervisory rating. The findings, in general, suggested candidates with more psychological problems tended to have more difficulties after hire, and the IPI was a better predictor of performance than the MMPI-II.

Varela, Boccaccini, Scogin, Stump, and Caputo (2004) conducted a meta-analysis to, among other things, assess the overall validity of personality measures as predictors of law enforcement officer job performance. Their results showed a modest but statistically significant relation between personality test scores and officer performance. They found prediction was strongest for the CPI and weaker for the MMPI and IPI.

Kostman (2005) investigated whether a correlation existed between applicant characteristics and PAI and CPI "job suitability" scores as reported on the Law Enforcement, Corrections and Public Safety Report available for each protocol. His results suggested that both the PAI and CPI Law Enforcement, Corrections and Public Safety reports were equally suitable for determining an officer's fitness for duty; thus, supporting the use of either the PAI or CPI as a suitable screening device for potential police candidates.

Lough and Ryan (2005, 2006) argued that the MMPI and CPI were the most widely used assessment tools, especially in the

United States. They suggested, upon a review of the MMPI and CPI literature, that one theme was clear: no consensus had yet been made as to the ideal profile for candidates seeking to become police officers. Furthermore, they indicated neither the MMPI nor the CPI was specifically designed for evaluating police applicants, and thus may be interpreted differently by individual assessors.

In an attempt to demonstrate how the NEO PI-R could be used in the selection of police officers, Detrick and Chibnall (2006) conducted a study of 100 field training officers (FTOs) who were asked to complete the NEO PI-R (observer form) for the best entry-level officers they had supervised. The results showed a profile of low neuroticism, high extraversion, and high conscientiousness. When they compared a group of low-performing officers to a high-performing group of officers they found the low-performing group had higher neuroticism and lower conscientiousness scores than the high-performing group. They also found the higher performing group had profile scores similar to those depicted by the FTOs. They concluded the results were relevant for identifying desirable characteristics for potential high-performing police officers.

Richardson, Cave, and La Grange (2007) in their study of police applicants and the PAI in New Mexico concluded the PAI has the potential for helping in screening potential candidates. However, they concur with others about the lack of research to support the use of the PAI over other protocols. Nonetheless, they believed it is one which should be considered perhaps ahead of tools such as the MMPI-II.

Based on the previous discussion, it appears personality protocols could play a major role in psychological screening of police candidates. They undoubtedly must be considered as the most prevalent of the types of protocols used.

Among the other recent studies on preemployment psychological testing of police candidates, Super (2006) found among these psychologists who provided psychological services to 478 federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies that in terms of psychological protocols, the most frequently mentioned five protocols used were the IPI, CPI, MMPI-2, Wonderlic Personality Test, and the PAI. In sum, he concluded a reasonable preemployment evaluation includes, at a minimum, a protocol for psychopathology, a protocol of normal personality functioning, and a protocol of cognitive or problem-solving ability.

Examining one state (Texas), Dantzker and McCoy (2006) found there were a variety of tests used among the major police agencies for preemployment police psychological screening. A survey of the 17 major municipal police agencies and the Department of Public Safety found the three most commonly used assessment tools to be the MMPI-II, 16 PF, and the PAI. Lee (2006), who also conducted a study of Texas police agencies' preemployment screening, found the primary use for this process was not to *select in* but *select out* candidates. He found the MMPI-II, IPI, and NEO-PI-R to be frequently used assessment tools with the MMPI as the most commonly used. Yet he concluded by suggesting the IPI as the best of the three for police screening.

In a follow up study, Dantzker (2007) surveyed a random sample of clinical psychologist members of the American Psychological Association regarding whether they conducted police psychological screenings and what they used, and—if they did not do screenings—what they would suggest be used. Among the respondents who didn't do assessments, the main protocol recommended

was the MMPI-II followed by the PAI, 16PF, the SASSI, and the SCID-II. The types of protocols used varied. However, the MMPI-II and the 16 PF were the two most often chosen by those who actually assess police candidates. It is interesting to note that the group that did not assess police candidates indicated the PAI as their second most frequent recommendation; yet only three of the assessment group actually used it. Furthermore, a large variety of other possibilities were also identified.

Finally, the results of a 2009 study comparing choices of protocols for employment screening between those self-identified as police psychologists and clinical psychologists who perform police employment psychological screenings found one significant difference between the two groups (Dantzker, 2010). The use of the CPI was more popular with the police psychologists; otherwise, there was no significant differences as to what was used or the reasons why it was used. Others support the broadness of police assessments indicating that personality assessments are common but that also cognitive tests and interviews should be part of the battery (Jacobs et al., 2011; Kitaeff, 2010).

What Does It All Mean?

Police work has been identified as difficult. Dantzker (2005, 2007) indicated that those who choose to perform police work should possess suitable characteristics. He also suggested that a main component is the individual's psychological characteristics. In an effort to employ the most psychologically suitable candidates, a majority of states have required preemployment, post offer psychological screening of potential employees (IADLEST, 2005).

The individual who conducts such evaluations should be a psychologist devoted to the field of police psychology, which includes having a strong knowledge of the field (Kitaeff, 2010). Despite consistent support for the preemployment screening process, there is an inconsistency in what should be used (Detrick & Chibnall, 2008; Drew, Carless, & Thompson, 2008; Forero, Gallardo-Pujol, Maydeu-Plivares, & Andrés-Pueyo, 2009; Jacobs et al., 2011; Weiss, Hitchcock, Weiss, Rostow, & Davis, 2008).

Undoubtedly, much has been written to support preemployment screening. However, there is a serious dearth of evidence to support what protocols should be used to conduct evaluations. There does appear to be a consensus as to a need for versatile and applicable assessment to include at least a personality inventory and a cognitive battery. As to which ones should be used, the debate continues and additional research is needed. However, it does make sense that an agency would want to know a candidate's intelligence, ability, and whether s/he has any personality or emotional disorders.

Along with lack of consensus of assessment tools, there appears to be no significant differences between police and clinical psychologists in their choices of protocols, raising a question of whether police psychologists are actually better at police preemployment screening that is using best practices, than general clinical psychologists. Therefore, it is recommended that

1. A profile is developed describing the requisite attributes sought in an individual who would best serve as a police officer, and

2. Studies are conducted to determine what existing protocols are best suited for screening-in individuals to police work based on the established profile.

Regardless of who conducts preemployment evaluations, a consistent or standard set of protocols would be appropriate. Until that occurs those who conduct these types of evaluations should ask themselves whether they are using the best tools for evaluation.

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Correction to Voss Horrell et al. (2011)

In the article “Treating Traumatized OEF/OIF Veterans: How Does Trauma Treatment Affect the Clinician?” by Sarah C. Voss Horrell, Dana R. Holohan, Lea M. Didion, and G. Todd Vance (*Professional Psychology: Research and Practice*, Vol. 42, No. 1, pp. 79–86), the word “While” was erroneously inserted in the first sentence of the “Clinician Factors” section. The sentence should have read, “As previously mentioned, clinicians may experience both VT and personal growth as effects of working with trauma survivors (Hernandez, Gangsei, & Engstrom, 2007).”

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